

**THE STUNDIST  
IN SIBERIAN EXILE  
AND OTHER POEMS**

**WILLIAM FETLER**



#### THE PRISONER OF HOPE IN PRAYER

And from the prison-cell ascends  
Each night their fervent cry  
For millions of their countrymen,  
For Russia far and nigh.

And in their hearts they hope to see  
The bright and happy day,  
When Russia is evangelized  
And Christ alone holds sway!

# THE STUNDIST IN SIBERIAN EXILE AND OTHER POEMS

BY

WILLIAM FETLER  
(“BASIL MALOF”)

WITH A PROLOGUE BY  
GABRIEL DERZHAVIN  
AND AN EPILOGUE BY  
BARBARA FETLER

WITH NINE ILLUSTRATIONS

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DEDICATED  
TO THE MEMORY  
OF MY "SECOND MOTHER," A FAITHFUL FRIEND  
AND NOBLE PARTNER IN THE GOSPEL,

MADAME ELISABETH TCHERTKOFF  
*NÉE* COUNTESS CHERNISHEFF-KROUGLIKOFF, THE  
FIRST OF THE RUSSIAN ARISTOCRACY TO RENOUNCE  
THE GRANDEURS OF THIS PASSING WORLD FOR  
THAT WHICH IS TO COME;

AND OF THAT APOSTLE OF SAVING GRACE  
LORD RADSTOCK

WHO WAS USED OF GOD TO LEAD HER AND  
MANY OTHERS IN ST. PETERSBURG TO JESUS  
CHRIST AS TO A PERSONAL SAVIOUR;

AND OF ALL THOSE  
WHO, FOLLOWING IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS, WERE  
COUNTED WORTHY TO SUFFER IMPRISONMENT  
AND EXILE AND MUCH PERSECUTION ON ACCOUNT  
OF THEIR FAITH.

"Yea, saith the Spirit, . . . they may rest from  
their labours; and their works do follow them"

REV. xiv. 13.

## F O R E W O R D

THESE songs have been extorted from a soul into which the iron has entered—the iron of uttermost suffering. They do not pretend to smooth elegance of phrase, having been forged in the furnace of the agony of a race.

We find in them the heart of the peasant or noble to whom liberty is dear, but Christ is dearer ; who love home and children, but love the answer of a pure conscience more ; and we may be thankful for the revelation of a courage and faith, which burns as brightly in Siberian exile and Bolshevik torture-chambers as ever it did in pagan Rome.

Pastor Fetler has entered deeply into sympathy with these persecuted ones ; and the revelation, given in the more personal poems, of his own heart-experience, reveals the intensity and passion of his personal character—these are the ground and warrant of his leadership. The following pages are dyed with the blood and tears of the saints, who, in the prisons and mines of the Bolsheviks, are sowing the seed for harvests that shall yet golden on the soil of “ Holy Russia.”

F. B. MEYER.

CHRIST CHURCH,  
LONDON, S.E.

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**THE STUNDIST  
IN SIBERIAN EXILE**



X. Mazarak.

#### IVAN NIKÍTICH RETURNING HOME FROM THE HOLY LAND

With greater burdens on his soul  
Wearily home he turned—  
A deep heart-thirst for righteousness  
As fire within him burned.

*See page 3*

## THE STUNDIST IN SIBERIAN EXILE

### I

*In which Ivan Nikitich travels far seeking salvation,  
but does not find it.*

IVAN NIKITICH was a man  
Esteemed by small and great ;  
Much had he read, and travelled much  
Through Russia's mighty state.  
And even to the Holy Land  
A pilgrim had he been—  
Jerusalem and Bethlehem  
And Jordan had he seen.  
His sins had driven him afar  
In search of lasting rest ;  
He worshipped at the holy shrines,  
And yet was he not blessed.  
With greater burdens on his soul  
Wearily home he turned—  
A deep heart-thirst for righteousness  
As fire within him burned.  
His thoughts were sad, his heart was sore,  
His spirit lone and faint,  
But all his native villagers  
Began to call him “ Saint.”  
And so from far, and so from near,  
They came to hear him speak

Of wondrous realms which he had seen,  
    Of treasures he did seek.  
And none was there so high esteemed  
    For many a mile around,  
As old Nikítich—*who himself*  
    *The treasure had not found !*

## II

*Where Ivan Nikitich is led to Christ through the visit  
of a Bible Colporteur.*

IT happened once upon a time  
    A stranger comes his way.  
Already evening was in sight  
    And far-spent was the day.  
A case with books is on his back,  
    His looks are calm and quaint,  
But from his weary steps one sees  
    That he is sorely faint.  
He stops a moment in the street,  
    Takes off his hat and prays  
For Heaven's guidance on his steps  
    At parting of the ways.  
Then on he treads, and at a house  
    He gently knocks, and waits  
Until Ivan Nikítich comes—  
    To whom the stranger states :  
“ I am a Bible colporteur,  
    I've travelled much to-day ;  
Please could I spend the night with you ?  
    What's needed, I will pay.”  
A moment—and he is inside,  
    A welcome friend and guest ;  
A samovar<sup>1</sup> is steaming soon,  
    A cup to cheer and rest.

<sup>1</sup> “ Self-boiler,” Russian tea-urn.

The colporteur takes out his books  
And turns from place to place—  
Explaining words of Way and Life,  
Of Truth and Saving Grace.  
And, as if scales had dropped from eyes,  
Ivan Nikítich cries  
That what he long had sought in vain  
Now comes as a surprise.  
Christ sees he, and Him crucified,  
The spotless Lamb of God,  
Who took the whole world's sins away  
As to the Cross He trod.  
No more he to the ikon<sup>1</sup> turns,  
In corner of the place ;  
No more three fingers does he join  
To cross before his face :  
For now no picture does he need,  
He has a *living* Christ !  
Ivan—so long unsatisfied—  
By Him at last sufficed !

<sup>1</sup> Image of some Saint, usually in the right-hand corner of the room.

## III

*The converts are nicknamed "Stundists," and  
persecution begins.*

THE Word was live, the fire burned,  
Still others caught its flame ;  
And soon wild rumours carried far  
New faith and a new name.  
And whisperings and threatenings,  
Against "foul Stundist creed"  
Were heard from priests and strazhniki<sup>1</sup>—  
From higher up indeed !  
For in the Empire's capital,  
St. Petersburg the Great,  
Pobedonostseff<sup>2</sup> held his sway  
In Church and in the State.  
The accusation was received,  
And by the Tsar's command  
Ivan Nikítich must be sent  
Forth from his native land,  
To cruel, cold Siberia—  
As many others went :

<sup>1</sup> Village police.

<sup>2</sup> Procurator or Head of the "Most Holy Governing Synod" during the reign of Alexander III. and the beginning of the reign of Nicholas II. He was an avowed enemy of all "Sectarians" (as the Evangelicals were also called), and instituted ruthless persecutions, resulting in imprisonment and banishment to Siberia and Trans-Caucasus.

In misery and poverty,  
    To lonely banishment.  
One day gendarmes<sup>1</sup> and strazhniki  
    With warrants duly signed,  
Came riding through the village street  
    With many folk behind.  
The village priest points out the house,  
    The pristaff<sup>2</sup> bangs the door—  
Ivan Nikitich will be free  
    Henceforward never more.

The strazhniki surround the place,  
    The pristaff enters in  
To apprehend the criminal  
    For Russia's greatest sin—  
“ For heresy, apostasy,  
    From Holy Mother Church ;  
To send thee to Siberia  
    For thee to-day we search.  
Give up thy cursèd Stundist books,  
    That I each one may burn—  
Ivan, say not a word, for thou  
    Shalt never here return ! ”

They take his Bible, book of songs ;  
    They snatch a tract or two,  
By Spurgeon, Moody, Newman Hall—  
    And *Pilgrim's Progress*, too.

<sup>1</sup> Special force in Russia dealing with political propaganda ; also employed in guarding State Railway stations and Customs-houses.

<sup>2</sup> Chief of the “ Strazhniki.”

They take his horse, his only cow,  
A table, chair, and bed—  
In chains they put his hands and feet,  
And forth Ivan is led.  
His crying wife, three children small—  
The baby at the breast—  
Are sped along the thorny paths  
Far from their native nest.  
Into a future, bleak, unknown,  
Tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp ;  
But as they go they sing, “ Thy Word  
Is to our feet a lamp ! ”  
They sing and weep, they weep and sing,  
While precious seed they bear ;  
One wonders : “ Will they come again,  
And will the sheaves be there ? ”

## IV

*In which Ivan Nikitich, with a gang of five hundred criminals, starts for Siberia.*

THE company, five hundred strong,  
    In Kief's holy town  
Were mustered in the prison court,  
    In prison boots and gown.  
With clanking chains upon their feet,  
    With faces pale and lean,  
Dark past, but future darker still,  
    And consciences unclean,  
With one exception in their midst—  
    The Stundist and his wife,  
As lone white sheep amidst the black,  
    As in death's shadow—Life !  
They do not look like criminals,  
    In spite of blackest paints,  
And even murderers exclaim :  
    “ Why fellows—they are saints ! . . .  
What have you done ? Whom have you  
    killed ?  
    Let us your docket see !  
Heigh, comrades ! note a miracle,  
    Or greater yet to be ! ”  
The thief still speaks—a shout is heard,  
    The captain calls aloud,  
The convoy's swords are quickly drawn  
    Around the exile crowd.

The prison gates are swung ajar,  
“ March on ! ” the captain cries ;  
The street is full of relatives,  
With sad, tear-blinded eyes.  
The chains do clank, the heavy beat—  
In dull united sound—  
Of scores of pairs of captive feet  
Strikes hard the concrete ground.

But, as the column starts to go,  
Ivan Nikítich kneels,  
His face he raises to the skies,  
He to his Lord appeals.  
His wife and children by his side  
Join in his silent prayer,  
While thieves and rogues and murderers  
In consternation stare.  
Then up they start—on, on they go,  
Clank, clank ! Left, right ! Left, right !  
And Kief’s holy city soon  
Sinks backward, out of sight.

## V

*Where the Stundist exile begins to testify of the Lord to his fellow-prisoners : "The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel."—PHIL. i. 12.*

THE sergeant shouts, the captives swear,  
    The little children cry ;  
One man alone goes undisturbed,  
    Without a tear or sigh ;  
For kindly in his face doth shine  
    The Bright and Morning Star,  
Ivan is calm and happier  
    And richer than the Tsar.  
Three in a row the exiles go,  
    And, as in yonder scene,  
A thief on the right, a thief on the left,  
    The Stundist walks between.  
They soon engage with him in talk—  
    Whence? . . . Whither? . . . For what sin?..  
And full of love to them, Ivan  
    Tells of his Hope within.  
And soon the word goes round the gang  
    About the holy man—  
And all desire to talk to him,  
    And talk whene'er they can.

At every stopping-place they all  
    Around the Stundists throng,  
And hear proclaimed the Joyful News  
    In holy talk and song.  
His little Testament in hand—  
    Much marked, much soiled, much read—  
He speaks of freedom for the chained,  
    Of Easter for the dead.  
The Cross of Christ is lifted high,  
    With Christ upon the cross—  
He speaks of losses that are gains,  
    Of gains that lead to loss.  
And as a wire full-charged with power  
    From Heaven's batteries,  
The word Ivan Nikítich speaks  
    A word of power is.  
And while the chains of steel remain  
    Upon the convicts' feet,  
Their spirits, liberated, sing  
    Around the mercy-seat.  
The *Tsar* condemned them for a crime,  
    *Christ Jesus* pardons all!  
They go and sing to Him, "All Hail!  
    Let Angels prostrate fall!"  
And as they halt along the way  
    To pass the night in sleep,  
Some convicts here, and others there,  
    In groups for prayer creep.  
They lift their hands in chains on high,  
    They praise the Lamb of God,  
Who in their stead to Calvary,  
    Worse than their exile, trod.

Worse than the worst Siberia,  
More cruel than their chains. . . .  
Thus from the convicts' barracks rise  
Their deep thanksgiving strains.

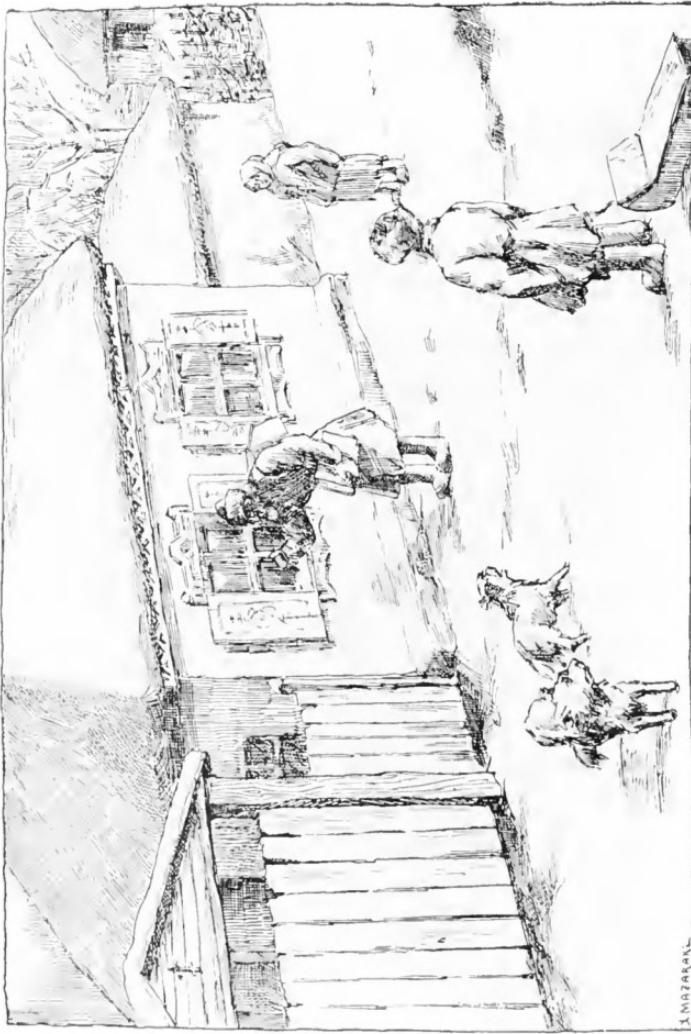
## VI

*Many of the converted convicts, sentenced to hard labour, proclaim peace in Jesus in the Siberian gold mines.*

THE exile path which seemed so dark  
Had turned triumphant, bright ;  
Their days were as the golden sun,  
As noonday was their night.  
At last o'er mountains, brooks and lakes,  
Through taiga,<sup>1</sup> dreary, wild,  
The journey's end is reached by all—  
Man, woman, youth and child.  
The men, for fear of their escape,  
To wheelbarrows are chained ;  
And thus, to get the precious ore  
From gold mines, they are trained.  
But other mines, more precious still  
They find as days go by :  
Souls of their fellow-prisoners,  
Which deep in darkness lie.  
They lift them up with Gospel spades,  
Melt them in flames of love,  
And scores of low-born criminals  
Are re-born from above.

<sup>1</sup> Taiga—peculiar Siberian prairies overgrown with shrubs and thick forests,

Until the mines *imperial*  
Sound with *celestial* strains,  
And none is freer than these men  
With wheelbarrows and chains !



A BIBLE COLPORTEUR KNOCKING AT IVAN'S HOUSE

'Then on he treads, and at a house  
He gently knocks, and waits . . .'

*See page 5*

## VII

## THE HOPE OF RUSSIA

IVAN NIKÍTICH, hundredfold  
Blest in his work of love,  
Becomes a shepherd of the fold  
Of souls born from above.  
The congregation is in chains ;  
The prison-court his church ;  
Wheelbarrows are the seats on which  
The Holy Writ they search.  
They hold no hymn-books in their hands,  
But in their hearts they sing  
Of Jesus and His righteousness —  
Of their Redeemer—King !  
And from the prison-cell ascends  
Each night their fervent cry  
For millions of their countrymen,  
For Russia far and nigh.  
The men who knew to curse and swear  
Have learned to pray and plead ;  
They pray for native villages,  
For provinces in need.  
They ask that places where, before,  
They stole and robbed and killed,  
With messages of peace and joy  
Henceforward should be filled.

And in their hearts they hope to see  
    The bright and happy day,  
When Russia is evangelized  
    And Christ alone holds sway !

ON BOARD SS. *AQUITANIA* FROM  
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*July 1921.*

## OTHER POEMS

# PROLOGUE

## “GOD”

AN ODE BY GABRIEL ROMANOVITCH DERZHAVIN

O THOU Eternal One, whose presence bright  
All space doth occupy, all motion guide !  
Unchanged through time's all-devastating flight,  
Thou only God ! There is no God beside !  
Being above all things ! Three in One !  
Whom none can comprehend and none explore ;  
Who fill'st existence with Thyself alone—  
Embracing all—supporting—ruling o'er !  
Being whom we call God—and know not more !

In its sublimest search, philosophy  
May measure out the ocean-deep—may count  
The sands 'neath the sun's rays—but, O God !  
for Thee

There is no weight, no measure ; none can mount  
Up to Thy mysteries ; Reason's brightest spark,  
Though kindled by Thy light, in vain would try  
To trace Thy counsels, infinite and dark ;  
And thought is lost ere thought can soar so high,  
Even like past moments in eternity !

Thou from primeval nothingness didst call  
First chaos, then existence ; Lord, on Thee  
Eternity had its foundation ; all  
Sprang from Thee ! of light, joy, harmony,

Sole origin ! all life, all beauty Thine !  
Thy word created all, and doth create ;  
Thy splendour fills all space with rays divine !  
Thou art, and wert, and shalt be ! Glorious,  
great,  
Light-giving, life-sustaining Potentate !

Thy chains the unmeasured universe surround,  
Upheld by Thee, by Thee inspired with breath !  
Thou the beginning with the end hast bound,  
All beautifully mingled Life and Death !  
As sparks mount upward from the fiery blaze,  
So suns are born, so worlds spring forth from  
Thee ;  
And as the spangles in the sunny rays  
Shine round the silver snow, the pageantry  
Of heaven's bright army glitters in Thy praise !

A million torches lighted by Thy hand  
Wander unwearied through the blue abyss !—  
They own Thy power, accomplish Thy com-  
mand ;  
All gay with life, all eloquent with bliss !  
What shall we call them ? Orbs of crystal  
light ?—  
A glorious company of golden streams ?—  
Lamps of celestial ether burning bright ?—  
Suns, lighting systems with their joyous beams ?—  
Yet Thou to these are as the moon to night ! . . .

Yea ! as a drop of water in the sea,  
All this magnificence in Thee is lost.

What are ten thousand worlds compared with  
Thee ?

And what, O Lord, am I ? Heaven's unnumbered  
host,

Though multiplied by myriads, and array'd  
In all the glory of sublimest thought,  
Is but an atom in the balance weighed  
Against Thy greatness ; is a cypher brought  
Against infinity ! What then am I ? Nought ! . . .

Nought ! But the effluence of Thy light divine,  
Pervading worlds, had reached my bosom too ;  
Yea, in my spirit doth Thy spirit shine—  
As shines the sunbeam in a drop of dew.

Nought ! But I live, and on hope's pinions fly  
Eager toward Thy presence ; for in Thee  
I live, and breathe, and dwell, aspiring high,  
Even to the throne of Thy divinity !  
I AM, O God ! then surely Thou must be !

THOU ART ! directing, guiding all, THOU ART !  
Direct my understanding then to Thee.  
Control my spirit, guide my wandering heart :  
Though but an atom 'midst immensity,  
Still am I something, fashioned by Thy hand !  
I hold a middle rank 'twixt heaven and earth,  
On the last verge of mortal being stand,  
Close to the realms where angels have their  
birth—

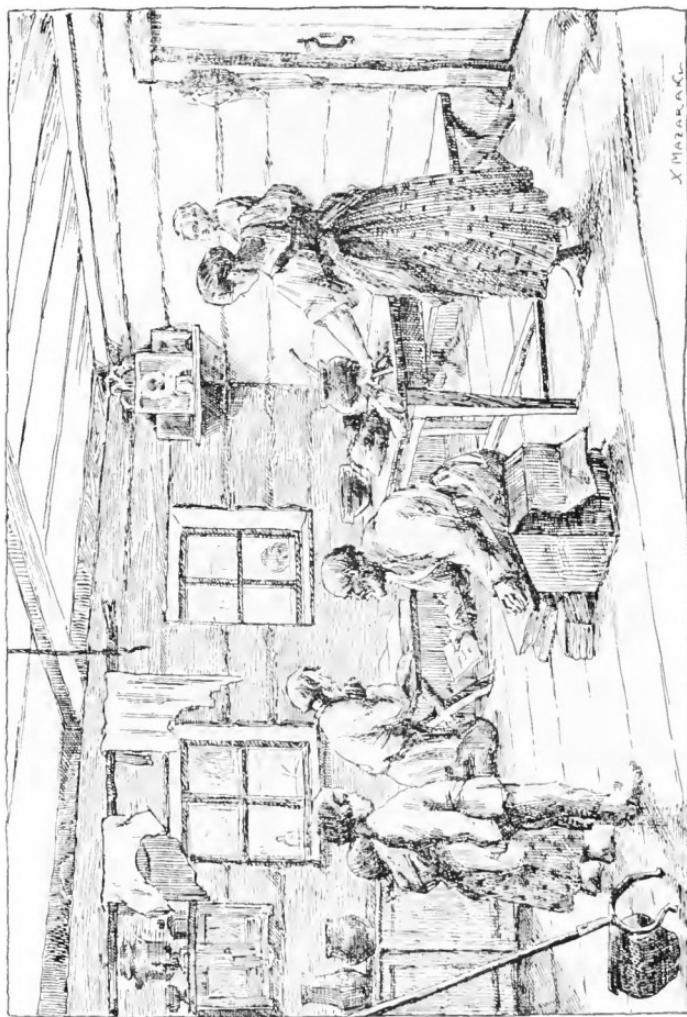
Close by the bound'ries of the spirit-land !

The Chain of Being is complete in me ;  
 In me is matter's last gradation lost—  
 And the next step is spirit—Deity !  
 I can command the lightning, and am dust !  
 A monarch—and a slave ! a worm—a god !  
 Whence came I here, and how ? so marvellously  
 Constructed and conceived ? Unknown ! this  
 clod  
 Lives surely through some higher energy ;  
 For from itself alone it could not be !

Creator ! Yea, Thy wisdom and Thy word  
 Created Me ! Thou, Source of life and good !  
 Thou, Spirit of my spirit, and my Lord !  
 Thy light, Thy love, in their bright plenitude  
 Gave me an immortal soul, to spring  
 O'er the abyss of death, and bade it wear  
 The garments of eternal day, and wing  
 Its heavenly flight beyond this little sphere,  
 Even to its source—To Thee—its Author there !

O thoughts ineffable ! O vision blest !  
 Though worthless our conceptions all of Thee,  
 Yet shall Thy shadowed image fill our breast,  
 And waft its homage to Thy Deity.  
 God ! thus alone my lowly thoughts can soar ;  
 Thus seek Thy presence—Being wise and good !  
 Midst Thy vast works admire, obey, adore ;  
 And when the tongue is eloquent no more,  
 The soul shall speak in tears of gratitude.

*Translated by JOHN BOWLING (in 1821).*



#### THE CONVERSION OF IVAN NIKITCH

The colporteur takes out his books  
And turns from place to place—  
Explaining words of Way and Life,  
Of Truth and Saving Grace.

See page 6

**R E T U R N   T O   G O D**

## THE PRODIGAL'S CONFESSION

So you desire to hear my story ?  
Well, I will tell you, as it is.

There was a time I lived in glory—  
I loved my father, I was his.  
I did not think of *my* desires,  
My joy was then to do his will ;  
And how I wish I had remained so ;  
So pure of heart if I were still !  
No cares at all did then oppress me,  
I sang and laughed the whole day long,  
And after work, when night had fallen,  
You still could hear my evening song.  
For heart that's innocent is merry,  
No heavy stone does press him down ;  
He even welcomes death with laughter,—  
He knows he'll get a victor's crown !  
I did not care for joy outside,  
My father's house was all I needed,  
My father's word was then my guide—  
Oh, if I'd his voice but heeded !  
My brother was my brother then,  
And everybody loved me dearly,  
Until I went, and went again,  
So far, that I had perished nearly. . . .

The story of my wanderings  
Is full of revelry and wine—  
From life of shame to husks and swine,  
From pit to pit, where no one sings.  
For what they music call, and song,  
Is nothing but a noisy throng.  
There is no melody, no beauty  
Where passions rule, where sin is duty.  
The more I sinned, the less I sung,  
Until all music died in me ;  
And dead as a bell that once was rung,  
But now untouched, I came to be.

I know when love is pure and holy,  
I know when love is base and vile,  
They never both can live together,  
Though both be dressed in sweetest smile.  
The smile of love divine is chaste,  
It leaves behind no bitter taste ;  
It makes one young, it edifies,  
It never fails, it never dies.

The counterfeit looks just like honey,  
But it is mixed with bitter gall ;  
It is a purse—but lacking money ;  
A fire painted on the wall.  
Words without heart, an empty sound,  
And what it builds—falls to the ground. . . .

Oh ! why should any go away  
From father's heart, from father's cottage ?  
Yet I was such a fool as they  
Who sell their birthright for a pottage !  
How little did I gain, indeed ;  
How much I lost, and still am loosing,  
Through this my foolish, sinful choosing !  
How great my crime, how deep my need !

Oh, let me rise ! I will return  
To him whom I despised in madness ;  
Though he might meet me cold and stern,  
There will be purity and gladness.  
For there's no joy that's joy indeed,  
Unless it does begin aright ;  
But if it *does*—though heart may bleed,  
There'll be rejoicing soon in sight.

Yes, I am through with seeking pleasure,  
I'm through with just myself enjoying !  
I've proved, and proved in fullest measure,  
That all this joy was my destroying.  
I've come to see that I was blind,  
The wilderness has changed my mind.  
This I have learnt through lessons sad :  
All joy is wrong that makes me bad ;  
But pain, and solitude and grief,  
And even punishment and rod,  
Are things that bring me true relief  
If they but bring me nearer God.

Now, not enjoyment will I seek,  
But what is useful, what is good :  
My efforts, though, be small and weak ! . . .

My friends ! let it be understood,  
I've ceased to blunder, ceased to roam—  
I have returned—to stay at HOME !

*August 22, 1918.*

### THE RETURN OF THE BACKSLIDER

THY backsliding child has returned to Thee,  
He repents of his going astray !  
The Blood of Thy Cross—it was shed for me,  
The Law of the Spirit has made me free,  
And again I can praise Thee and pray.

Thy banqueting-house is so full of light,  
And I was in darkness outside !  
Thy banner of love has become my delight,  
But oh ! how cruel and cold is the night  
Of one who from Thee does backslide !

Thou cravest for love of the noblest type,  
Love undivided of heart ;  
After many a struggle, many a stripe,  
Thou, Fairest of All ! my love is ripe—  
Now never from Thee to depart !

Now, nearer than father and mother and child,  
Now, dearer than husband or wife,  
Art Thou to me who was once beguiled ;  
Thy gentleness, so forgiving and mild,  
Has restored the joy of my life.

## ECCLESIASTES TWELVE

*"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of a man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away. . . ." —I PET. i. 24.*

YES ! also I was young and brave,  
I built and planted, planned and wrought ;  
I used to laugh at death and grave,  
My deeds responded to my thought.

But death has come into my bones,  
I'm prematurely weak and old ;  
Instead of bread—I'm raising stones,  
My look has turned so stern and cold !

I used to sing of gardens fair,  
But now of graveyards do I talk ;  
I used to be here, everywhere—  
But now around I barely walk.

With weary limbs and tired head,  
I lie the whole night half awake ;  
A little yet and I'll be dead—  
Fresh blood and brains will live instead,  
Until the great Daybreak !

*November 15, 1919.*



THE VILLAGE PRIEST POINTS OUT THE HERETIC'S HOUSE

The village priest points out the house,  
The pristaff bangs the door—  
Ivan Nikitch will be free  
Henceforward never more.

## THE BLESSEDNESS OF FORGIVENESS

### PSALM XXXII.

THE heaven was brass to me :  
I cried and wailed and wept—  
Through many a night unslept  
I would turn, my God, to Thee,  
Without an answer, without a sign  
Of Presence Divine.

Was there no God to reply ?  
Or was He deaf to my cry ?  
Austere, serene and august  
And turning away from the mean  
Did He only care for the clean,  
Despising the child of dust ?

Is there no chance for me  
To find in heaven a place ?—  
To whisper my prayer to Thee,  
To look once more on Thy face ?

But day and night His hand  
Was upon me heavy and strong  
Until I should understand,  
Would confess all sin and wrong.

When, with tears of shame and sadness  
I poured out my heart at Thy feet,  
At once I was filled with gladness,  
With pardon and peace complete !

*July 9, 1919.*

## **FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD**

## HIS REST

*"He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works. . . . For we which have believed do enter into rest."*—HEB. iv. 10, 3.

WE have an understanding—  
    My Lord and I :  
For He alone can help me,  
    And He doth satisfy.  
I trusted in His promise,  
    For it was best ;  
The storm at once subsided  
    And now I rest.

Worn out and heavy laden,  
    I roamed around ;  
My strength was quickly failing,  
    My mind unsound.  
Dark thoughts would come a-flying,  
    Besieging me ;  
I wrestled hard and laboured,  
    But was not free.

I took advice from others,  
    Their plans I tried ;  
They *seemed* so good and helpful  
    Until *applied* !

The system was so perfect,  
All letters true—  
But frozen, dead and helpless  
To make me new.

I went to His disciples  
And told my need ;  
Despite their words, they also  
Did not succeed.  
The words were just the same words  
The Master used—  
But I was still in trouble,  
Unloosed and bruised.

And then I heard the Master's  
“ Come unto *Me* !  
I, I alone, can help you  
And set you free !  
Child, leave *Me* all your burdens,  
Leave and believe—  
Tell *Me* your inmost longings  
And then—*receive* ! ”

Hail ! Thus I ceased my *trying*—  
He *does* instead ;  
My heart is fixed for ever,  
Calm is my head.  
For spirit, soul and body  
He doth *supply*—  
We have an understanding,  
My Lord and I !

*January 11, 1920.*

**“BLESSED ARE THE MEEK”**

MATTHEW v. 5.

THE nations rage, the rulers fight,  
And all proclaim that might is right ;  
Intrigues are used by small and great,  
And hearts are full of bitter hate :  
But in the vale and on the peak,  
    God *seeks* the meek.

Sharp sounds are heard on every side,  
Our homes are oft indwelt by pride ;  
We try to save our life and name—  
We will insist upon our fame :  
But while with bitterness we speak—  
    God *loves* the meek.

God loves to dwell in simple hearts—  
To meek ones He His grace imparts ;  
Commit into His hands thy ways,  
Trust in His goodness all thy days :  
Then rest in peace, though poor and weak—  
    God *crowns* the meek !

*January 14, 1920.*

## CALVARY

Go to Calvary, my brother,  
Where for you the Saviour bled.  
There He fought the world's worst battle,  
There He bruised the serpent's head.  
And the great Goliath vanquished—  
All the Philistines must flee :  
If you want complete deliv'rance—  
*Go to Calvary !*

Dwell on Calvary, my brother,  
Pitch thereon your pilgrim's tent—  
There's the new Shekinah glory  
With the veil asunder rent.  
Crucified by faith with Jesus,  
We are now for ever free :  
If you want to dwell in safety—  
*Dwell on Calvary !*

Stay on Calvary, my brother,  
While around storms never cease ;  
Hosts of darkness rule unhindered—  
There alone is lasting peace.  
With the Father, Son and Spirit  
Holy fellowship have we :  
If you want the joy that's perfect—  
*Stay on Calvary !*

*January 23, 1920.*

## FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS

I THANK Thee for the sweetness of Thy presence,  
Thy fellowship which satisfies my soul !  
Thou art my joy, my light and my salvation ;  
Thou, sweetest Jesus, art my All in all !

How lone I was when, Lord, I did not know  
Thee !

How weak was I, without Thy presence near !  
Now Thou dost come to dwell in me for ever—  
Ills, doubts and anguish wholly disappear !

O Jesus ! Lover, Chief among ten thousand,  
I know I'm Thine—Thy blood has made me  
so !

I am redeemed, and freed from sin for ever,  
Now in its place Thy holiness will grow.

*February 19, 1919.*

### FOLLOWING THE LAMB

LET me for ever be one of those  
Who follow the Lamb wherever He goes !  
There is no pleasure nor purpose for me  
But, Chiefest among ten thousand, in Thee !  
Thou hast captured my soul by Thy love divine—  
I am the branch, Thou art the vine ;  
The sap of Thy Spirit doth flow through my soul,  
And Thou hast become my all in all.  
I worked in the kitchen and had no rest,  
But now at Thy feet I have found the best !  
My heart turns away from the voices outside,  
All that I crave is the voice of my Guide.  
Oh, sweet communion ! Oh, hours of bliss !  
My Beloved is mine and I am His !  
Sanctified, now, the rest of my days,  
Filled with His Spirit, I'll sing His praise !

*March 27, 1919.*

"THE CORN OF WHEAT MUST DIE"

JOHN xii. 24.

THE corn of wheat must fall into the ground,  
The corn of wheat must die.  
If not, for ever it remains alone—  
The corn of wheat am I !

What shall I choose ? Plans that are all my  
own ?  
My worthless self, its little short-lived day ?  
Shall I exist to satisfy my mind ?  
For what am I, left to myself, I pray ?—

Flesh born of flesh, earth taken from the earth,  
But low, debased through sin's corrupting  
breath !

Whatever wish springs up within my heart  
Is foul and base ; my very life is death.

They speak of nobler efforts for mankind—  
That is, for me, and others such as I ;  
But has man's nature changed ? This flesh we  
wear—  
Does it become more holy as we try ?

No ! flesh is flesh, the seat of lust and pride,  
Spiritual it does not, cannot, turn ;  
In every point that I may yield to it  
Comes loss to nobler nature in return.

---

Then let me die with Christ upon His Cross !  
Then let me rise with Him on Easter Day !  
And to this body as a dwelling-place  
Let now His Spirit come, in me to stay.

Christ lives in me ! My wretchedness is gone,  
His Spirit's law has set me free from sin ;  
The earthly cravings now are neutralized  
Since Christ the risen One has entered in.

Yes, I am dead ! Not by my efforts hard,  
But simply trusting that He died for me.  
If One has died for all, then all are dead in  
Him,  
And all believing ones are risen just as He.

This is the Spirit's fruitful harvest-field—  
Eternal joy for moments few that pained . . .  
Now comes much fruit ; now streams of blessing  
flow,  
The risen life is Paradise regained !

*September 6, 1918.*

## REDEMPTION

I WAS created by my God a king,  
But through my fall I have become a slave ;  
In angels' choir I had learned to sing,  
But missed the mark and sunk in silent grave.  
And now I, who was once so pure and brave,  
Have turned a coward, poisoned by death's  
sting.

I did not care for God's preventive " No ! "  
I reached my hand to taste forbidden fruit—  
And so I changed my innocence for woe,  
Health was displaced by foul disease's root.  
The nightingale became a tortoise mute,  
And Eden turned to desert long ago.

Then came He, full of pity and of grace,  
He gathered all the thorns upon His brow ;  
With bitter blood-sweat on His careworn face  
He crossed my desert with His Calvary's plough  
He worked so hard—and I enjoy it now !  
That I may rest, He ran for me the race !

*May 24, 1919.*

## THE BURIAL

ROMANS vi. 11.

AND thus I went into the grave—  
    The hidden grave, and cold—  
To lose my soul and not to save  
    Life that was not yet old ;  
From turmoil and unrighteousness  
I went for peace and quietness—  
    All that I had I sold.

With nothing left of all my own  
    Now I could follow Him ;  
With Christ alone upon my throne  
    All other light was dim ;  
Now, “ Jesus only ”—what a bliss !  
I wonder whether joy as this  
    Have e'en the cherubim !

The way into the grave is dark,  
    But at the end is light ;  
I go now by the blood-stained mark,  
    But then through lilies white.  
Rough stones though now do cut my feet—  
Hail ! City of the golden street,  
    Of sapphire, chrysolite !

*December 24, 1918.*

" HOLINESS "

If Christian walk is only talk—  
From such Christianity I'd balk !  
For there is nothing so repelling  
As words, mere words, with goodness swelling.  
The nobler, holier, your speaking—  
Your testifying, singing, praying—  
Lo, there is nothing so betraying  
As empty life, and aimless seeking.

The Master's judgment of the tree  
Whose pride lay solely in its leaves,  
Was not too harsh. And though He grieves,  
He looks just so at you and me.

For if He plants you in His soil,  
Applies to you His love and toil,  
He rightly can expect returns—  
The fruitless branch dries up and burns !

I'm saved by Grace, but not to sin,  
I'm born again to be God's child ;  
And if, before, I acted wild,  
Now meek and lowly, loving, mild,  
My character and life must be,  
For Christ has come to live in me.

If I a raven were before,  
And, though I struggled, could not sing—  
Since Christ is mine, I live no more ;  
He lives in me, the Nightingale  
Of Paradise, of vernal Spring.  
Filled with His Spirit, now doth ring  
Rich with His music every dale !

The ancient saints did testify,  
Of Joy, and Strength, of Grace for Grace,  
But nowadays we wail and sigh  
With graveyard-looks upon our face !  
True, we shall die, but not for aye,  
Once buried we must rise again.  
The night is past, eternal day  
Has dawned for resurrected men.

Chime, Easter Bells ! The empty grave  
Is full of light and vernal flowers !  
Chime, Easter Bells ! This joy is ours—  
God to the uttermost doth save !

Not merely words, but real life,  
Not passing sentiment, but fact.  
By faith is ended helpless strife,  
Ours is believing—His to act !

*September 6, 1918.*



#### IVAN NIKITICH IS ARRESTED

'They take his horse, his only cow,  
A table, chair, and bed—  
In chains they put his hands and feet,  
And forth Ivan is led.

His crying wife, three children small—  
The baby at the breast—  
Are sped along the thorny paths  
Far from their native nest.

See page 9

## REFINING

*"He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."*—  
MAL. iii. 3.

WHAT patience and what love and hope  
He shows toward the piece of ore !  
He keeps His furnaces ablaze,  
He watches as the metal melts,  
Glad at the separating dross.  
What heat ! What trying, dying hours  
The silver ore is passing through—  
Well-nigh despairing as the flames  
Attack again on every side.  
Still He proceeds as if He were  
The silver's bitterest enemy,  
He adds more fuel to the fire,  
He looks with unrelenting eye.

At last He o'er the fluid bends,  
Which now reflects His smiling face.  
The mixture now is silver pure,  
A finished product free from dross ;  
What seemingly at first was loss,  
And what so hard was to endure—  
The furnace heated seven-fold—  
Has come to be the highest good,  
The blessing indispensable,  
God's choicest blessing in disguise.

Now the sublime objective reached,  
The Great Refiner rests at last ;  
The trying flames are cooling off,  
The furnace is not needed more,  
It was a means but to an end. . . .

O heart of mine, do not despair !  
Do not grow weary being tried,  
Grow rather weary of thy dross—  
Be glad to suffer loss supreme  
Until the face Immaculate,  
The Great Refiner's matchless face,  
Will be reflected in thine own.

*November 16, 1919.*

### PRESSING TOWARD THE GOAL

I WILL not consent to sin,  
Even though so oft I fall ;  
I will rise again to win—  
Pressing on toward the goal.

Never will I make a peace,  
'Twixt my spirit and the flesh ;  
And the more it tempts to cease—  
I will start the fight afresh !

It's a lie that I love sin,  
It's the devil's blackest lie—  
Since the Lord was born within  
I have learned with Him to die.

Now with steadfast single gaze  
At the Saviour of my soul,  
I'll continue all my days  
Pressing on toward the goal.

*May 24, 1919.*

### MY LIGHT AND MY SALVATION

HELP on, O Lord, though darkness all around me,  
Thou Christ, my Light and my Salvation art ;  
I will not fear with Thee as my Defender,  
And Thou wilt never more from me depart.

Be near, O Lord, when friends turn into strangers,  
Those of one's household, enemies become ;  
Then stand by me, Thou Friend who never  
changest,  
When all alone I have remained—then come.

And in my loneliness, when chilly winds are  
beating,  
When trees do weep, and heavy stormclouds  
press—  
Speak Thou as Thou alone canst speak through  
sorrow,  
Help me to Canaan through the Wilderness.

O Love Divine, sweeter than mother's bosom !—  
Come on then, storms, I will not be afraid !  
E'er ye broke loose, your power was fought and  
broken—  
See on a pillow Him so calmly laid !

*December 10, 1918.*

**FREE**

ROMANS viii. 2

*“The law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”—PAUL.*

FREE ! Free at last ! The spell of death is  
broken,  
The Spirit's law hath truly set me free !  
No more shall sin o'er me have its dominion,  
For I am dead and Christ now lives in me.

Free ! What a charm this word now has ! What  
music !  
I wonder whether angels sing as sweet ?  
The serpent's head is bruised ; the “Seed” for  
me was wounded,  
And by His stripes my healing is complete !

Free ! But how dark and dismal, full of terrors,  
Was the long night of slavery and fear !  
So many demons forcing chains upon me—  
Thoughts of despair—so real and so near. . . .

Now all is o'er ! As when the sun ariseth,  
Damp mists and fierce night-terrors quickly  
flee—  
Thus has the Sun of Righteousness arisen  
With healing in His wings, and I am free !

*May 21, 1919.*

# S E R V I C E

## THE CITY

I LIKE the busy city, with its noise and smoke  
and din,  
I like the busy city, with its recklessness and  
sin,  
For where is sin there I can go with the Gospel's  
silver bell,  
Ring out with a steadfast hand in hope, and lead  
them out of hell !

How much has sin abounded in the busy city  
street !  
How many a conscience soiled and scarred, how  
many wandering feet !  
*There* is my place ; there I must go, with a pure  
and loving heart :  
I know that some will repent and return, and  
homeward they will start.

In the midst of the city's pollution and sin as the  
blackest night,  
Let me be as a falling snowflake, that comes  
from heaven so white.  
And if the sound of my message they would  
hear with a deafened ear,  
Let the purity of the snowflake be a witness  
around them and near.

One day I know they will be ashamed of the  
darkness of their life,  
They'll grow tired of joyless joy, of envy and  
hate and strife.  
Then as they look on the snowflake, with its  
message of peace and rest,  
They will start for their Home, with tears, and  
fall on the Father's breast.

There all at last shall gather, who repented and  
who wept,  
Who left dark sinful Egypt, as Passover they  
kept.  
It will be another city, with its mansions and  
streets of gold,  
With peace and rest by the crystal sea, with  
purest joy untold !

There in the streets of that city, will children  
come and play,  
No danger of being hurt, no sleep at the end of  
day.  
For the day will never end, and a night will  
never begin,  
And nevermore in that city will be pain or sorrow  
or sin.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA,  
*September 10, 1918.*

## WANTED : PROPHETS

THE world again needs prophets, for this is a  
day of woe,  
Though peace is proclaimed from housetops both  
by friend and by foe.  
Men in prophetic garments, but with unpro-  
phetic tongues,  
Dream of the golden age, while condoning present  
wrongs.

Instead of telling aloud what the *future* Herods  
will be,  
The *present* Herods should hear a verdict, straight-  
forward and free !  
But we prefer their banqueting-halls to a dismal  
prison-cell,  
With charity treat we crime, because *we* wish to  
be treated well !

We sit with the guests of honour, with priests  
and scribes and lords ;  
Betraying our holy calling, we listen to charming  
chords !  
And when the head of the prophet dead, is  
brought on a charger in,  
We do not rend our garments, nor rise to de-  
nounce the sin.

We come to Herod's mansion as men of sweet  
psalms, and lo !

E'en Herod and Herodias to our church-worship  
go !

We read our masterly essays ; we imitate  
Solomon,

As we speak of the grass in the field and the  
cedars of Lebanon.

We rise to eloquent heights as we preach to  
ladies and lords,

Our words are smoother than oil, but none like  
two-edged swords !

No piercing or dividing of spirit and soul apart,  
No discernment of criminal thoughts and of  
hidden intents of the heart.

They hear with patience our sermons, as the  
arrows fly o'er their heads ;

Why should they worry, or be disturbed on their  
adulterous beds ?

Their consciences are not pricked by anything  
we say—

Why should they think of repenting, or of killing  
us for our pay ?

We consider ourselves well paid by sufficiency of  
cash

From the pocket of Herodias, by the courtiers'  
applause and flash.

What if we have to dance according to Herod's  
flute !—

While others will lose their heads, we'll keep  
ours by being mute !

We consider ourselves well paid by the crowds  
who throng our Church.

Why should we examine their hands ? Why  
should we for purity search ?

What if they are money-changers, and sellers of  
oxen and sheep ?

We'll get a good part of their spoils if silent our  
tongues we keep !

The prophets of old were renowned for swimming  
against the tide ;

More profit we have found as with the stream  
we glide ;

Instead of enriching others by making them  
naked and poor,

We fast are becoming bankrupt through gains  
that cannot endure.

*The world which remains unsalted by prophetic  
visions true*

*Will perish without repentance, and the prophet will  
perish, too.*

*The Church that is unchastened, grows full and is  
choked by weeds—*

This vision is true and prophetic, and let him  
run who reads !

*May 24, 1919.*

## OUT OF TUNE

I AM out of tune with the worldly Church of our day,  
The Church that thinks she is rich and wise,  
The Church with shorn locks and with blinded eyes,  
That lives in memories of its long past sway ;—  
Past duties of valour, dead faith in her prophets dead,  
Whose tombs she proudly builds up, while present prophets are led  
Before mock trials of judges and leaders blind,  
And thence to new “Places of Scull.” . . .  
With such a Church, though I may be thought unkind,  
And though my judgment be reckoned dull.  
I had better tell you soon—  
I am out of tune !

I know my shortcomings, and they are many indeed,  
And yet I cannot join in the song which the worldly Church doth lead,  
I cannot stoop down to false judgments, to call good that which is wrong,  
To agree that black is white and blindly follow the throng.

If I am full of shortcomings—I feel them, I cry  
and repent,  
And so I have to die daily, my hope is the Veil  
that was rent . . .  
But to enjoy the world as the modern Churches  
do,  
Nay, that was too hard for me, so that is why I  
withdrew !  
I could not play in their concert, that's why I  
quit it so soon—  
    I was out of tune !

There still are humble souls joined not by dead  
forms or creeds,  
Born from above by the Spirit, washed white  
from their wicked deeds ;  
They sit in heavenly places, though walking  
still on earth,  
Their sorrows are so different, and different is  
their mirth.  
Their faces—whether radiant with peace and joy  
serene,  
Or whether solemn and earnest from struggles  
and trials unseen—  
Show that on earth they are strangers—their  
Homeland is far away—  
That's why the strains of their music sound like  
one who has started to pray !  
It's the talk of a soul with its Maker, of one  
who is born from above,  
Who knows that the Lord is gracious, who is  
sure that God is Love . . .

Then as they sing—oh, what music ! So full  
of fragrance and grace ;  
What harmony, full of heaven, transfiguring life  
and face !  
Yea, when we touch such people, how easy and  
what a boon—  
To sing in tune !

*May 6, 1920.*



#### IMPRISONMENT OF THE STUNDIST AND HIS FAMILY

With one exception in their midst—  
The Stundist and his wife.

*See page 10*

### TRUE GOLD CAN WAIT

TRUE gold can stand the trial,  
True gold can afford to wait ;  
The fiercest flames of judgment  
Will only prove it first-rate.  
So welcome whatever your fate,  
For soon or late,  
If you are real gold,  
Your value will be told.

Why, therefore, should you worry,  
Why should you fret ?  
If others do not esteem you—  
Forgive and forget. . . .  
For can their lack of esteem  
Diminish the price of your soul ?  
And can the blindness of multitudes  
Make also your vision small ?

And what if a hundred years  
Should pass, after you are dead,  
Without your being appraised aright ?  
What if you were taken for lead ?  
Why worry ? One's life would be poor, indeed,  
Should it last just a year or two ;  
A piece of wood may perish, in need ;  
But as for gold, which is true—

A thousand years are like yesterday,  
It laughs at corruption and rust ;  
Dig it up from the sod, take out of the pyramids,  
Wipe off the centuries' dust :  
And again it will shine as it did on that day,  
When it saw its unperishing birth,  
And nothing will take its value away—  
Neither secret vaults nor the earth. . . .

There is a day that will come at last,  
A day of justice and right,  
When Passion Friday will turn to Easter,  
And darkness will turn to light !  
A day when values will be revalued,  
And perfect truth will be told,  
When spade is called spade, base tin is un-  
masked,  
And real gold called gold.

*January 21, 1919.*

## GOD'S HEROES

THOU still dost need Thy heroes, Lord,  
Who will obey Thy every word ;  
Thy Jephthahs and Thy Gideons,  
Thy John-the-Baptists, " Thunder-sons."  
No special men 'cause of their birth—  
Just dust as we, earth of our earth,  
Men of like passions with the rest,  
But men of mighty faith possessed—  
With childlike faith !  
For a child's faith is great and strong,  
It's full of innocence and song,  
It loves the right and shuns the wrong,  
That's why all little ones belong  
To God's great heroes.

Of such, God's righteous kingdom is,  
For every little child is His.  
They know no camouflage nor guile ;  
They have no secret things to hide,  
Their face is heart just turned outside,  
They win their battles with a smile.  
No trenches deep they have to dig—  
They come and take the fort by storm ;  
There is no task for them too big :  
They lift them with affections warm.

God's heroes ! Yes, until we learn  
To be unselfish, pure in heart,  
Make love wherever we should turn,  
I'm sure we'll never do our part  
In God's great kingdom.

*August 19, 1918.*

“NONE OF THESE THINGS MOVE ME”

ACTS XX. 24.

“None of these things move me.”  
So the Apostle said;  
Though surrounded by trials,  
His heart in sacrifice bled.

“None of these things move me.”  
Though sickness and pain beset,  
In suffering’s darkest moments  
In God he is trusting yet.

“None of these things move me,”  
By foes and false brethren assailed,  
He relies on Him who is faithful,  
Whose promise has never failed.

“None of these things move me,”  
For in Christ is hidden my life.  
In tempest I rest on a pillow,  
Am secure in the thickest strife.

He holds me above the waters,  
Fierce fires He leads me through,  
For from Him I have learned a secret—  
“If you will pray, I will do ! ”

*August 14, 1921.*

## ALWAYS GOD

THERE is always an Egypt for a Joseph,  
There is always a selling by the brethren—  
A false accusation, a prison,  
Long months of trial and waiting. . . .

But there is always a God who watcheth,  
Who puts in the pit a pillow,  
Has master-keys of all prisons,  
Who supplies to His servants patience.

If only they'll not forget Him,  
But trust in Him nothing doubting,  
Will not attempt their own rescue,  
Committing it to Jehovah ;

He'll quickly work out their deliv'rance,  
Will cause men's wrath yet to praise Him,  
Will change the slave to a ruler,  
The prison-house to a palace !

# **CHRISTIAN HOME**

## MY ONLY ONE

### SONG OF SOLOMON vi. 9.

ONLY one is the choice of my heart,  
There is only one friend to me  
That can soothe my soul when it deeply doth  
smart,  
Until all griefs and burdens depart  
And again I am happy and free.

There is only one, when silent tears  
Flow down my careworn face,  
Who kisses away my pains and fears,  
Who has faithfully loved me all these years  
With patience and tender grace :

It is my wife, my sweetheart, my friend—  
God-chosen partner of life ;  
She stands by me when others offend,  
I know on one I can always depend—  
On my sweetheart, my friend, my wife !

Together the family Bible we read,  
Together we weep and pray ;  
For our God is the same, the same our creed,  
The same Good Shepherd our souls doth feed  
And keeps us from going astray.

Because of Him our friendship is strong,  
For He is our Nearest and Best !  
Our love grows deeper the way all along,  
Until we join the white-robed throng  
In the City of perfect Rest.

*May 29, 1921.*

## TO MY WIFE

My darling wife, my helpmeet kind and true—  
In foreign climes my thoughts go out to you.  
Your loving smile, your quiet words and ways,  
Lend such a comfort in my pilgrim days.  
Though far apart, yet you are ever near—  
    My Dear !

Remember, years ago, when in my solitude  
I met you, loved at once, and first I wooed. . . .  
As lily of the valley you were to me,  
As a desired haven to mariner at sea.  
Your love, so pure and childlike, brought me  
such calm and cheer—  
    My Dear !

Now, years have come and gone, the sun did  
rise and wane,  
We've known not only solace, but also tears and  
pain.  
Our love has learned to suffer, but stronger grew  
thereby,  
As in the midnight watches we heard our *baby's*  
cry :  
And on your face, through agony, I saw a smile  
appear—  
    My Dear !

And never had I loved you, my darling wife, as  
then ;  
I gently kissed your forehead, I knelt and kissed  
again.  
Your face, so pale, transparent, with peaceful,  
loving eyes  
Was in itself a sermon, that lifted me to the  
skies :  
The great, deep mother-heart of God through  
you became so clear—  
    My Dear !

And now, I know, God suffered, in order that we  
may live ;  
He loved when He gave His Son, and He taught  
us to suffer and give.  
And as His Son was bleeding on Calvary's cruel  
tree—  
He gave new birth to a people, He died for you  
and me :  
He led captivity captive, arose, and again will  
appear—  
    My Dear !

*May 24, 1921.*

## MY ISAAC

My Isaac—was it hard to sacrifice him ?  
Him, who was dearer than my very soul !  
I felt like to a tree plucked up, roots, stem and  
branches,  
It seemed as I were sacrificing all.

My Isaac ! Born to me when well-nigh dying—  
A miracle, a gift, a sacred trust.  
And now—can that be true ?—I must be living,  
present  
To see him pass away, and pass away he must !

Can I forget how, when he—still a baby—  
I used to sport with him—my life, my joy,  
When in strong father's arms I used to take him—  
He laughed so merrily, my darling boy !

And now—Moriah ! Place of bitter sorrow,  
Of bleeding hearts, of cruel thorns, of fire. . . .  
I first resented, argued, I protested :  
Who has the right to take my soul's desire ?

But then, as quietly I wept before Him,  
“ My child,” He said, “ Thou art as dear to me,  
And even more than Isaac to thy spirit ;  
Were this not needed, would I ask of thee ?

" You loved him so, since he is your creation,  
In him you lived, for him you moved and toiled ;  
But God is greater than your utmost efforts—  
By sparing what is good, your *best* is spoiled.

" For whosoever saves his life shall lose it ;  
Be that one's parent, child, or *work* or wife ; . . .  
But who his best for me brings to Moriah,  
Shall reign with Me in Resurrection Life."

*May 8, 1921.*

## THE ISHMAELS AND THE ISAACS

THIS is my Ishmael, O Lord,  
    But Abraham too had one :  
He tried to help the plan of God  
    Before the promised son ;  
And oh ! what years of weariness,  
    And oh ! what days of woe,  
Until his own accomplishment—  
    His Ishmael—had to go.

The years and strength on Ishmael spent  
    Are weary, wasted years ;  
Alas ! so little of sunshine there,  
    So much, alas, of tears !  
For plants which Father did not plant  
    Must all be rooted up ;  
So Ishmael goes, and Abraham weeps  
    And drinks his bitter cup.

Yet although Abraham failed to see  
    Thy perfect will, and wait—  
God, to whom mercy doth belong,  
    Thou still didst change his fate ;  
Thy promise and Thy love were sure,  
    And Ishmael, though he goes—  
From tears to laughter—in his place  
    The promised Isaac grows.

Thus also, Lord, I dare to hope,  
Though I have swerved aside  
At times from Thy good plan for me,  
Yet Thou art still my Guide ;  
So I beseech Thee to forgive  
My selfish, hasty ways !  
May all mistakes and bitterness  
Cause me to sing Thy praise.

Then let *the way first planned for me*,  
My feet be taught to go !  
And in my courts, joy to my soul,  
Let now Thy Isaac grow !



#### ON THE ROAD TO SIBERIA

And as they halt along the way  
To pass the night in sleep,  
Some convicts here, and others there,  
In groups for prayer creep.

## GOD'S ANGELS

THE other day upon a train,  
As I was crossing a Western plain,  
A little darling of four or five  
Sat opposite me, so bright and live.

Such innocence on her cheery face,  
And the look of her eyes so full of grace ;  
Each single action, loving and mild,  
Of this pure-hearted, God-given child.

They say no angels are seen in our day—  
I am sure I have met this one on my way !  
And I would question if one with wings  
A message more tender and soothing brings.

Is not each little child we see,  
God's messenger sent for you and me ?  
A heavenly preacher, pure and true,  
Who tells us what we should say and do ?

A child is a stranger to sin and shame,  
A child cares nothing for honour and fame,  
Nor for ships or lands, gold mines or banks,  
Explosives, aeroplanes or tanks. . . .

" Except ye repent and become as a child,  
So humble and trustful, unselfish and mild "—  
The Truth has told us—not otherwise  
We shall enter into God's paradise.

*May 21, 1919.*

**THE ETERNAL HOME**

OH ! how oft I looked and wondered,  
Why the clouds are dark and thick,  
And my heart is sad and lonely,  
And my soul so faint and sick !

Then I thought of Home eternal,  
Of the land where sorrows flee,  
Of the sun that never darkens,  
And I thought, my Lord, of Thee !

What a glory doth await me,  
When my pilgrimage shall end,  
When at last I'll be for ever  
With my Saviour, and my Friend !

*July 27, 1918.*

# **R U S S I A**

## SIBERIA

SIBERIA, thou land of tears and sorrow—  
Thou wilt become the land of joy to-morrow !  
Where shackled men with pale and morbid faces  
Were driven till they died in exile places,—  
Songs of the Free will cheerfully resound,  
The land of curse will soon be holy ground !

Oh, how they wept, those women tender-hearted,  
At sight of sons and husbands as they parted !  
Clank ! clank ! . . . it sounded as they went  
their way—  
What change of sound as they return to-day !  
SIBERIA ! thou land of sin and shame,  
May glorious in future be thy name !

*September 9, 1912.*

## THE CRY OF RUSSIA

WILL you listen to the cry of Russia ?

Will you hearken as their children weep ?  
They are hungry, but the fields are barren !

They are thirsty, and the well is deep !

Yea ! and deep in sin their soul is sunken,  
Miry clay foundation for their feet.

Ages came and went, but no glad footsteps ;  
No one came whose heart would warmer beat.

And they suffered, till their chains grew rusty,  
And they waited till their eyes grew dim ;  
When for life, in very death despairing,  
Of a sudden they were told of Him :—

He who suffered long before, and for them—

He who waited long for their return.  
And as Russia's children heard their Shepherd's  
story,

How they wept for joy, how hearts within did  
burn !

And they clung to Him as loving child to mother,  
And again to suffer they began.  
Now, however, smiling in their exile,  
And in chains, they praised the Son of Man.



#### A PREACHER IN CHAINS

The congregation is in chains ;  
The prison-court his church ;  
Wheelbarrows are the seats on which  
The Holy Writ they search.

Chains at last are broken, distant exile places  
By the Cross are changed to Christian homes.  
And the Word is preached throughout the  
mighty empire,  
Both peasant huts, and in the princely domes.

They are waiting, Russia's millions, waiting—  
Only few are freed by Christ as yet.  
Who will go, and who will help the going ?  
Hasten then, before the sun is set !

1912.

## A RUSSIAN MISSIONARY'S LONGINGS

SEND me back where I am needed,  
To my people poor and sad ;  
Where Thy message will be heeded  
By the weak and by the bad.

Send me, for I here am lonely,  
Stranger in a foreign land ;  
I am going, Jesus ! Only  
Hold me by Thy guiding hand !

I have seen your thriving cities,  
I have walked along your streets ;  
I have heard your homely ditties  
And have tasted all your sweets.

But my heart is longing, longing,  
Where is heard my native speech,  
Where the hungry crowds are thronging  
Just to hear us simply preach.

And to preach—that is my calling :  
Woe to me if I forget,  
When the need is so appalling,  
And the crowds are waiting yet !

Let me go ! Oh, do not hold me !  
They are dying—can I stay ?  
I must go, for He has called me,  
And I must my Lord obey !

PHILADELPHIA, U.S.A.,  
*November 6, 1919.*

## **EPILOGUE**

## E P I L O G U E

### MEMORIES OF MY CHILDHOOD : EASTER IN RUSSIA

By BARBARA FETLER

WHEN the spring winds begin to blow and the trees begin to bud, when the whole of nature seems to sing the song of resurrection, my imagination is flooded with the memories of my early childhood. I cannot help giving way to them, and I find myself once more in a large country house, where I spent the first twelve years of my life.

Easter is coming ! There is no greater event in the whole year. It is indeed the festival of all festivals ! The Russian people, with very few exceptions, prepare themselves to meet that great day by forty days' partial fasting, confessing their sins to the priest and taking Holy Communion. All this was strictly observed in our home.

What joy it was to meet the first day of the great Lent in our home ! We children just loved it. The absence of meat, butter and milk during the meal-times, the special Lenten dishes, the clean, scrubbed floors, something in the very

atmosphere, turned our home into an entirely new world. Every child in turn used to read about three chapters of the Gospel at night, while mother rested on the sofa and the other children gathered around.

It was an unrealized dream of my mother, the dream of her life, to go one day on foot with a party of pilgrims to that wonderful land of Palestine and to worship at the holy places—the scenes of Jesus' birth, of His childhood, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension. She used to tell us endless stories in connection with it. I remember myself many times sitting in the twilight at the window, and watching the clouds being swiftly carried by the wind in the same direction, as if they were in a hurry to get somewhere in time. I have thought : Where do these clouds go ? Maybe they go to that fairyland of Palestine. A moment more, and I myself was flying with the clouds—far, far away over land and sea, feeling the gentle fresh spring breezes. Imagination worked more and more, and already I saw the River Jordan, like a broad blue ribbon, and the massive groups of trees in Gethsemane. I held my breath for fear of disillusioning myself, until mother's voice, calling me for supper, awoke me from my dreams. . . .

The Saturday before Palm Sunday is called Lazarus' Saturday, in remembrance of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. On the eve of that day we used to go in the meadow, where

stood an old willow, from which we plucked the tender budding branches, to meet the Lord in the temple the next morning. What delight it was to go in the dark, with a little lantern, to that old tree !

On Good Friday, towards evening, a great Church ceremony takes place, *viz.* the opening of the Holy Sepulchre. The sufferings of Christ end and He gives up the ghost : the veil which divides the Holy Place from the Holiest of Holies, where the priest stands at the open sepulchre, is torn in twain. A large ikon, representing the body of Jesus, is carried out from the Holiest of Holies, and the burial procession takes place with church banners, ikons, lanterns, burning torches. All join in singing a peculiar burial song about Joseph of Arimathea, who took from the cross the body of Jesus. This song is sung only once a year, on this occasion, and the melody is wonderful. I knew people who could not hear it without tears. Then the body of Christ is carried inside the church and put in the sepulchre, surrounded with roses and white lilies, which fill the place with exquisite aroma. No more services or singing take place in the church. The people silently worship the Holy Sepulchre. "Children, keep quiet to-day," says mother at home ; "the Lord is in the tomb." "Can any one dare to speak if He is quiet ?" was the thought expressed by someone during those days. I read in my story-book a sermon

on Good Friday by one of the great saints, which corresponded very much with our feelings on that day. He went out to the people and said :

“ Brethren, what shall I say ? Our Lord and our Saviour is in the tomb ! Let us weep and pray ! ”

On Great Saturday morning my mother used to get up before the dawn, with the first church bell. I tried to be awake at the same time, and to go with her long before breakfast to the church, bringing flowers for the Holy Sepulchre. I always thought of Mary Magdalene and other holy women who came “ early while it was yet dark unto the tomb,” bringing spices. It was such a delight to imitate them !

After the short visit to the church, everybody got busy. The rooms had to be put in perfect order, a large quantity of eggs must be coloured, and the Easter table arranged with all sorts of special Easter dainties.

Everything was ready by noonday, when the priest usually came with the curate to sanctify the Easter table. Every one in the family reverently kissed his hand, and I remember myself always doing that with trembling. I thought of him not as an ordinary man, but as a very wonderful man, almost as holy as Christ Himself—and how could it be otherwise, if he was a mediator between us and God ?

After the priest was gone, all the children had to go to bed, if they were to go to the midnight

Easter service, and certainly everybody wanted to go ; even the little babies were carried, because nobody could afford to stay with them at home.

We had to be in the church before midnight. We could see from a distance, already, how it was all shining with brilliant lights, from the steeple to the very base. Inside you could not recognize it for the same church. Black mourning garments of the priest were changed into golden robes, and so all the appearance of the church became bright and shining.

The Easter procession begins strictly at midnight.

“ Christ is risen ! ” declares the priest.

“ He is risen indeed ! ” answer all the people.

The procession goes three times around the church and enters inside. The Holy Sepulchre is brought into the Holiest of Holies until the next year. The choir sings triumphant Resurrection hymns. The service does not last long after that. We go home and have our Easter breakfast, the earliest breakfast in the year, long before the sun rises. Then we go to sleep and get up about ten o’clock on Sunday morning.

So it comes ! Our long-expected first day of the Easter week. The children play with the coloured eggs, and the time passes quickly.

The “ visitors ” begin to go round on Easter Monday, congratulating each other upon the great festival. Instead of ordinary words of

welcome, they say: "Christ is risen!" and the answer is: "He is risen indeed!"

Then little by little, even from the second day, disappointment slowly but surely creeps into the heart.

We have been waiting so long. We have been expecting so much, and now. . . . These somewhat intoxicated "visitors" and endless parties, the ordinary conversations, and enjoying one's self in an ordinary prosaic, materialistic manner by good eating, drinking, and pleasantly spending the time. . . . Oh! how all this strips from our beautiful Easter festival its mysterious charm, and the heart feels so sad and dissatisfied and empty!

But the year passes by. Then comes spring-time again, and the whole of nature is in full expectation of a coming resurrection. The first day of the great Lent comes. The church bells again ring slowly and solemnly, calling the people for worship and meditation and repentance, that they may be able worthily to meet the great day of Easter. Again the hearts of the Russian people are full of expectation of something wonderful. They crowd the churches and listen to the weeping, monotonous tunes of the sacred hymns. They fast and pray, and they know that all this will end in the great and glorious Day of Resurrection.

And let me say that this expectation is not in vain. We feel that fresh spring winds are

beginning to blow after the centuries of cruel, deadening winter. A woman saved from suicide by the preaching of the Gospel in Chernovitz ; fifty souls converted in three meetings in the Government of Minsk ; three Red Guards singing in the choir of another missionary in the Government of Volyn ! Are these not the first swallows of the coming spring ? And not only these. The news comes that in some parts whole villages are turning to Christ. The ice melts under the Divine breath. Resurrection ! Resurrection ! Glad Easter Day !

Oh, let us go and tell the Russian people that the resurrection of Christ means our resurrection to a wonderful new life, for " He died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him, who for their sakes died and rose again ! "

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